

Intel Gets 'Real' with Small Businesses

Small Business Computing

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[Intel](#) has launched a worldwide initiative to educate small- and medium-sized businesses on how to select the right server system to meet their needs.

"Our research shows only a minority of small businesses in emerging markets have the necessary server systems to operate efficiently. Many others are making do with desktop computers that were designed as single-user PCs, or outmoded proprietary systems," said Willy Agatstein, general manager of Intel's Reseller Product Group. "Our goal is to provide the resources to these customers so they can compete on a global level."

Agatstein said Intel defines small businesses as any company with fewer than 100 employees, but that the vast majority of businesses that Intel wants to reach actually have fewer than 20 employees.

"Years ago a similar initiative targeted resellers, educating them about the best way to sell servers to small businesses," Agatstein said. "This time, we're kicking it up a notch to take care of the businesses that don't have a dedicated IT staff — we want to reach out and educate all small businesses about the benefits of upgrading their infrastructures."

Through the "real server campaign" that is being rolled out worldwide this week, Intel will work with industry partners in its reseller channel, including distributors, dealers, system builders, local original equipment manufacturers and solution providers, to provide technical and marketing assistance to reach small- and mid-sized businesses. Emerging computer markets around the world, such as China, India, Brazil, Mexico, and Russia, will receive special focus.

Agatstein said that a fair share of Intel's recent growth originated in small businesses overseas — specifically Europe and Asia. While the heart of Intel's message is that all small businesses have room to grow, Agatstein said it's really a reminder of things many small business operators already know.

"Most small businesses start with one person and a PC," Agatstein said. "They start with an idea and a database — then add a print server or a fax server and then network a system around that single PC. Desktop PCs are designed for processing applications, not supporting entire small business infrastructures."

Many small businesses don't have the correct server equipment to meet the modern demands of business computing, which include multitasking, security, networking, and extensive storage. The right server can deliver a total cost advantage, including lowered operating costs, improved performance, and room to grow. But more than anything else, a proper server system, ideally powered by an Intel chip such as the Xeon processor, allows small businesses to stay in business.

Agatstein shared a typical example of the advantages of putting a proper server system to work for a small business.

"My daughter's dance studio recently had to have every one of its current customers fill out new paperwork for all the students," Agatstein explained. "Why? Because the one PC that held its entire customer database crashed and they were essentially out of business. This is just the type of situation our initiative is designed to reach — averting a business computing disaster before it happens."

Small businesses typically participate in local groups and associations as part of their business networking. They share stories and common experiences about operating a small business to help each other grow through the good times and the bad. Intel wants to be a part of this community, only the networking isn't one-on-one — its infrastructure building and learning about the advantages of managing high bandwidth connections to the Internet, the importance of high capacity storage and redundant components, as well as server operating systems for multi-user applications.

Intel has assembled a training program for system builders that includes technical information, hardware samples, white papers, product briefs, advertising templates, collateral material, marketing training, and a pricing rebate schedule. Small business operators can pick up information online at Intel's "real server" [site](#) or contact a [local](#) Intel partner to learn about the chipmaker's new program for small business computing.

Intel is not alone in reaching out to small businesses this year. We've seen major small business initiatives launched by many of the big manufacturers, including Cisco, Dell, Gateway and IBM, among others. Agatstein said Intel's initiative is different, not because it's a global campaign, but because the largest chipmaker in the world understands small business priorities.

"Small businesses' number one priority is putting food on the table," Agatstein said. "Number two is making payroll, and number three is to keep growing. Intel can show them their options, so small businesses continue to have the room to grow."